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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed to help educators and community leaders plan and implement professional development initiatives for family child care providers at the community level, and is based on Dayton Hudson Corporation's 1992 Child Care Aware (CCA) campaign to educate child care consumers about quality family child care. Part 1 provides an overview of the CCA initiative, which focused on consumer education, provider training, accreditation, and the creation of provider associations. Part 2 identifies strategies for the organization and launching of community groups on the CCA model, including the development of realistic goals, selecting and hiring staff, creating an advisory board, and finding funding. Part 3 introduces three strategies used by community groups to promote professional development among family child care providers. The discussion of training, the first strategy, includes charts of commonly used curricula, techniques to enhance learning, and a home observation checklist. The accreditation section includes a chart comparing the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation process and the Child Development Associate (CDA) credentialing process and of the pros and cons of each approach from a policy point of view. The final strategy, building strong family child care provider associations, includes discussion of the impact of associations, strategies to promote strong associations, and permanence. Two appendices provide an annotated bibliography of CCA resources and a list of sponsoring agencies of CCA initiatives. (MDM)

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Child Care Aware:

A Guide to Promoting Professional Development in Family Child Care

Lessons Learned from Child Care Aware Sites

Amy Laura Dombro

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Child Care Aware:
A Guide To Promoting Professional Development In Family Child Care

by

Amy Laura Dombro

Prepared for the Child Care Aware Initiative
Sponsored by the Dayton Hudson Foundation, Mervyn's, Target Stores, Dayton's, Hudson's, and Marshall Fields.

FamiliesandWorkInstitute

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Amy Laura Dombro

January 1995

How To Use This Guide

Although approximately one third of all the children in child care in the United States are cared for in family child care homes rather than centers, support and recognition of this segment of the market have been absent. Yet for many years, there has been concern among some in the early childhood field and parents about the quality of family child care. Dayton Hudson Corporation, a major merchandise retailer based in Minneapolis, also was concerned—about the quality of care received by children of its employees and customers.

Following its tradition of supporting social action and arts programs in the communities it serves, Dayton Hudson went the next step and *did* something about improving quality. Beginning in 1988, Dayton Hudson's Mervyn's division launched the Family-to-Family Initiative—now known as Child Care Aware—a pioneering effort to enhance the quality of family child care through the professional development of providers and a consumer education campaign to educate parents about quality and how to find it. In 1990, Target Stores joined and expanded the effort. The Department Stores Divisions (Marshall Field's, Dayton's, and Hudson's) joined the Initiative in 1993. Over a seven-year period, these entities have invested over $10 million in this effort. They have demonstrated the positive change that can be realized when resources and leadership are dedicated to a carefully conceived and well-managed effort.

This guide is designed to provide you with the information you need to plan and implement a professional development initiative in your community similar to Dayton Hudson's Child Care Aware Initiative. It is filled with insights and lessons learned from family child care providers and site staff who have been out there making a difference. These have been gathered and analyzed in a five-year long evaluation conducted by experts from the Families and Work Institute. A separate guide, *Child Care Aware: Community Consumer Education Strategies*, will address planning for and implementing a consumer education campaign.

You may be a staff member of a child care resource and referral agency, community college, or licensing agency or a family child care association leader. Regardless of whether you plan to implement the entire model or a single component, we've written this guide to let you know you are not alone in your commitment to improving the quality of family child care and to help you build on the momentum created by Child Care Aware sites across the country.

How To Use This Guide

The professional development strategies you will read about in this report: training, accreditation, building strong associations, and consumer education, are not new. But Dayton Hudson has done something new with them by integrating these strategies into a quality improvement campaign and given communities the financial and technical assistance support they need to implement these strategies. And through Child Care Aware, Dayton Hudson has proven that these strategies *do* work. Child Care Aware has had direct impact on the professional development of providers and the delivery of family child care in 40 communities across the country. A core of provider-leaders who will carry on efforts to improve quality has been created. These are the same providers that people said were underground and wouldn't want to become involved. That was before Child Care Aware. Family child care in the United States will never be the same.

The first section will give you an overview of the Child Care Aware Initiative and describe its rich legacy—in Child Care Aware communities and across the entire field of family child care.

In the second section we will identify the steps you need to take to get your project off the ground. These include deciding if this project is for you, setting challenging, yet realistic goals, selecting and hiring project staff, creating an advisory board of community partners, and finding funding.

The third section will introduce and explore the three strategies used by the sites to promote professional development: training, accreditation, and building strong provider associations. This section will be filled with practical information and advice to help you as you implement one, two, or all three of these strategies in your community.

And finally, this guide will close with a list of resources and contacts that you may wish to consult for further information.

Child Care Aware: An Overview

STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE QUALITY: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CONSUMER EDUCATION

Typically, the funders identified one organization to sponsor the Initiative in each community. Usually it was a child care resource and referral agency, but in some cases it was a community college, vocational-technical school, or family child care provider association. While generally one agency was chosen as the sponsoring or lead agency, communities found the commitment and willingness of agencies to work together to promote quality was key to their success.

In each community, strategies were implemented to promote professional development of providers and consumer education among parents. Three professional development strategies were implemented. These were:

- **Training.** Implementing training included the customizing of curricula, recruiting providers, and providing ongoing comprehensive classes.
- **Accreditation.** Implementing accreditation included providing support to providers through scholarships, mentors and support groups as they went through the NAFCC or CDA accreditation process.
- **Creating or strengthening local provider associations.** This strategy involved supporting associations as they identified and developed leaders.

In 1992, Dayton Hudson launched Child Care Aware, a nationwide consumer education campaign to enhance the work being done on the community level in helping parents find and recognize quality child care. Using in-store activities, brochures, posters, newspaper and television advertisements, and a toll-free information line, the campaign expanded local consumer education efforts.

The combined focus on professional development and consumer education creates a two-pronged approach for meeting the critical need for higher quality child care in America today. Just as providers and parents need to work as partners in providing quality care for one child, both need to be involved in improving the quality of care for all children. As providers begin to see themselves as professionals and learn more about quality, they seek out training, accreditation, and involvement in provider associations. These activities provide the information, skills, and support providers need to offer quality care in their homes thus increasing the supply of quality care. At the same time, as parents learn more about quality care and how to find it, they

create a demand for quality. Together, increasing supply and demand mean that more children will be receiving higher quality child care.

IMPACT OF CHILD CARE AWARE

Child Care Aware is one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken to enhance the quality of family child care in the United States. During the past seven years, the professional development of providers has been significantly impacted by Child Care Aware. Over 13,000 providers participated in training in the 40 Child Care Aware communities. In the majority of sites, training for family child care providers is now being offered on an ongoing basis through community colleges and training departments of sponsoring agencies. During this same period, over 500 providers became accredited, representing 50 percent of the total number of providers accredited across the country. Provider associations were created and strengthened and this will continue as the need for effective leaders continues to be addressed. Sites are establishing mentor programs with the underlying goal of improving knowledge, skills, and professionalism among providers. Providers report they are more likely to see themselves as professionals committed to offering quality care than they were before. Family child care providers have emerged as leaders in the ongoing work of improving child care quality across the country.

The initiative has also influenced the quality of child care on a national level by contributing a substantial portion of the national leadership for quality in family child care. As a result, family child care has had a larger role in policy debates. Because providers have been informed through training, accreditation, and participation in associations, there is now a strong advocacy presence for family child care in cities and states where Child Care Aware occurred.

Finally, Child Care Aware communities are working to improve quality purposefully and with increased awareness. They are making the commitment to quality family child care permanent. These communities now have more confident and trained providers, and more knowledgeable parents who together have great potential to make a difference in the lives of children and their families. As a staff member at one site explains,"

> *"The value of the Child Care Aware grant in a community is greater than could have ever been imagined. What started as a focus on quality child care touches much more in the community that will benefit kids for their whole lives."*

Untold millions of children and families will ultimately be the beneficiaries of Child Care Aware.

CHART A: THE LEGACY OF CHILD CARE AWARE

AREA	IMPACT
Professional Development	Providers report an increased sense of professionalism, awareness of the importance of quality, pride, and self-confidence. Child Care Aware has created new leaders in the family child care field and given existing leaders a place to focus their energies. Providers are increasingly taking leadership roles in provider associations and other early childhood organizations.
Training	Since 1988, over 13,000 providers have been trained. These providers nurture and educate approximately 65,000 children and their families.
Accreditation	Though meeting accreditation goals remains a challenge for the majority of sites, over 500 providers have been accredited, representing 50 percent of those accredited across the country.
Provider Associations	In the vast majority of Child Care Aware communities, provider associations have been created, supported, or strengthened through funding, technical assistance, publicity about association activities, and promoting membership.
Consumer Education	Child Care Aware responded to sites' need for technical assistance and additional funds to increase their capacity to conduct consumer education. The campaign has brought the issue of consumer education to the forefront where it is continuing to be explored by the early child care field.
Public Policy	Child Care Aware continues to influence legislation at local and state levels, most notably in the areas of planning for and finding new sources of funding, creating favorable zoning for family child care providers, creating training materials, and increasing training requirements.
The "ripple effect"	Sites have identified and created a rich collection of resources (e.g. publications, conference presentations) for providers, parents, and associations. In addition, the growing self-esteem and confidence of providers and parents in Child Care Aware communities will benefit children for their whole lives.

First Steps

In this section we will discuss the steps needed to get your project off to a solid start: deciding if the project is for you, setting goals, selecting and hiring staff and creating an advisory board of community partners. The order in which you do these steps may vary. But regardless of the timing, each must be accomplished to get your project off and running.

DECIDING: IS CHILD CARE AWARE FOR YOU?

Are you ready to take on an initiative to promote professional development? This isn't a challenge to accept lightly. Carefully thinking through the answer to this question is the first step in deciding if this project is for you. To begin with, consider your needs and priorities, the level of effort that will be required, and community factors that impact success.

Level of Effort Required

Implementing a project like Child Care Aware will require substantial levels of time, money, staffing, and commitment:

- Initiatives ran for three, and in some cases four or five years. In the most effective sites, Child Care Aware was seen as the beginning of an ongoing commitment to training, accreditation, building of strong associations and consumer education.
- Funding averaged slightly over $200,000 per site over three years. This was in addition to in-kind contributions of lead agencies including resources such as space and staff.
- For the first years, the project typically required one to two fully dedicated staff members.
- Though hard to measure quantitatively, site staff needed and demonstrated tremendous dedication. Their long hours, commitment to quality, flexibility, and resilience allowed them to face major challenges—creating effective collaborations, identifying and addressing barriers to accreditation, seeking funding—and to enjoy significant success at impacting the quality of family child care in their communities.

Your Needs and Priorities

What are the various needs of the providers in your community? What resources are available to address these needs? To answer these questions, consult with people who know: providers and representatives from your local resource and referral and licensing agencies. Below are some questions to explore:

In the area of training:

- What training opportunities are already available to family child care providers?
- What are the available resources for offering training? Will you need to recruit trainers? What are your potential trainers' experience, knowledge and understanding of family child care? What supports will they need?
- What strategies are in place to recruit providers to training and other professional development activities?

In the area of accreditation:

- How many providers in your community are accredited?
- What are the available resources for promoting accreditation? What kinds of supports will providers need? Who will offer the necessary support?

In the area of provider associations and other supports for providers:

- What are the activities of family child care providers in your community? Are there associations, support groups, family child care providers involved with other early childhood organizations?
- What kinds of support do providers currently receive? What other supports do they need?

In the area of building community support for this project:

- Who are the players in your community involved in quality early childhood issues? What are their true feelings about family child care? Are they willing to work together to implement and carry through the project?
- What other organizations (employers, food programs, community groups) might be interested in helping to identify and obtain funding to implement this project and to make it a permanent part of the community?
- What kinds of publicity contacts do you have in your area and how could they be used to promote community awareness of family child care and your initiative to improve quality?

In the area of evaluating your impact:

- What evaluation format is currently used for workshops and/or training that is offered in the community?
- What other types of evaluation might you need to provide formative feedback and to document the impact of your efforts?

You will of course need to evaluate the answers to these questions within the context of other community needs to help you determine how addressing the quality of child care fits into the whole picture including other priorities and available resources.

Insights from Existing Sites: On Community Factors that Impact Success

The presence of certain factors in your community can help your efforts to improve quality be more effective. When these factors do not exist, you may find yourself "swimming against the current". It is still possible to improve the quality of family child care, but you may need to adjust your goals and funding accordingly to compensate for the time and energy it will take to overcome obstacles created when these factors do not exist.

Factors that positively impact success include:

- Leaders in the provider community;
- Sponsoring agencies that have a proven track-record of fundraising;
- Family child care provider associations that are supportive of training and accreditation;
- Community colleges that are enthusiastic about and supportive of family child care;
- Child care standards that promote quality and are regularly enforced;
- Licensing agencies with representatives who understand family child care and are committed to helping providers obtain high levels of quality;
- Zoning ordinances that permit family child care and professional development activities; and
- Overall economic health of a community.

Most important of all is the willingness of the "players" in a community (mentioned above) who are concerned about quality to come together and work towards a common goal.

Additionally, sites have found it helpful to be part of a nationwide initiative and have benefited from the lessons learned by other sites across the country.

> *"The Child Care Aware name gave us a sense of identity. We could plug into a network that had field-tested many of the ideas we would try. And in turn,-we could contribute our ideas and lessons learned."*
>
> Initiative Director
> Chicago, IL.

SETTING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of Child Care Aware is to improve the quality of family child care. The challenge faced by Dayton Hudson and now by you is to set goals that are both challenging and realistic. Challenging goals motivate individuals and teams to stretch beyond what they might have otherwise thought possible. But challenge must be tempered with realism to avoid undermining your efforts with unnecessary frustration because impossible goals were set.

As you set your goals, identify specific objectives to help you meet each one. For example, you may want to determine that a certain number of providers will be trained or accredited within a specified period of time. Or you may have as an objective to collaborate with provider association leaders to help them increase their membership by a certain number of providers. Setting objectives such as these will allow you to measure and evaluate your success.

Each Child Care Aware site worked with the funders to determine realistic objectives of how many providers would be trained and accredited in each community. But there was more. Child Care Aware served as a catalyst to help communities not only implement but to institutionalize or make permanent these strategies to enhance quality. This meant sites were charged with the challenge of figuring out how to integrate these strategies into existing services in a community and, when possible, to arrange ongoing funding to support them.

Setting Goals and Objectives in Your Community

To meet the goal of enhancing quality, you may set objectives that are similar to those set by Dayton Hudson and Child Care Aware sites. Or you may find, as many Child Care Aware communities found, that depending on the specific needs of a community there were additional objectives to be met to improve the quality of family child care. For example, you may determine a need to:

- Educate your community's licensing agency about quality family child care and how best to support it by including regulators as part of your project team;
- Educate and bring on board new funders to support your efforts to focus on family child care and improve quality;
- Change zoning laws to allow providers in a certain part of the community to offer care; or
- Change regulations about the number of children one provider can care for to assure provider/child ratios that promote warm and responsive interactions.

A project like Child Care Aware can help you meet each of these objectives—and many others. Implementing a quality improvement campaign will put the spotlight on family child care in your community. It will lead to the creation of a core of leaders in the provider community. It can help build effective collaborations to focus the efforts of community partners (i.e., representatives from licensing, community colleges, early childhood professional organizations, and funding organizations) on improving the quality of child care.

SELECTING AND HIRING STAFF

Your staff will be the people who put your project in motion and set its tone. Give yourself the time you need to find the right people.

Qualifications

The specific positions you create will depend on the scope of your project and the amount of funding available. When positions to be filled have been determined, look for people who are hard working, dedicated, and flexible. Staff members must be able to deal with the ambiguities that are part of any new project. And they must have the capacity to learn and innovate as they go.

In terms of specific skills, look for a proven record of fundraising and collaboration building with individuals and existing systems, i.e., licensing and community colleges—these skills are especially important for the project coordinator.

Staff's Vision of Family Child Care

Most importantly, however, is that staff members hold the vision of family child care as a respected and valued profession and family child care providers as respected and valued professionals. If your staff members are former or current providers, you are probably covered in this

area. If not, take care since it is this vision that creates the foundation for building mutually respectful, effective partnerships with providers—the key to Child Care Aware's success at both a local and national level.

CREATING AN ADVISORY BOARD

Creating an effective advisory committee is another key to a successful project—giving providers and other community partners a sense of ownership and commitment to the effort. Without their involvement, your impact in the community is likely to be limited.

Members

The first step in creating an advisory board is to consider who in your community might be impacted by your project. Then think of who may be able to support your efforts. Not surprisingly, your lists are likely to contain many of the same people. It is a good beginning since the balance between benefiting and giving forms the basis of many successful collaborations. Following is a list of members of existing advisory boards and a few suggestions for how each might benefit from and contribute to your project to enhance the quality of family child care:

- **Representatives of local family child care associations.** The providers who benefit from training and your support for accreditation and the development of associations are the same providers who can inform your work with insights from the field, "spread the word" of your project among colleagues in associations, and be effective trainers and mentors.
- **Potential and actual funders.** In the case of Child Care Aware sites, these were typically managers and team leaders from Mervyn's and Target Stores. Your funders may include your county, city or local United Way business or foundations. The people who fund your project benefit from your success in the media, at work, and in the community. After all, your success is their success. Serving on your advisory board keeps them in touch with how things are going. Rather than being surprised at the end of a project that something didn't turn out as planned, together you can make any necessary adjustments along the way.
- **Business leaders.** The business leaders who benefit from having higher quality care available for their employees may be potential funders or have connections you need to find funding.
- **Other community leaders including representatives from state government.** These leaders benefit as your project improves the quality of life for their constituents. They can bring your project a variety of resources ranging from their insights to free space for classes to publicity to funding.

- **Local child care regulators, food program representatives, and early childhood colleagues including representatives from Head Start and local AEYCs (chapters of the National Association for the Education of Young Children).** These people are in the same business as you: improving quality in child care. Their goals are being supported by your effort as well as their own. Because your work is similar, you will be able to benefit from each other's experiences and lessons learned.
- **Community college representatives.** These members of your board stand to benefit since the providers you are serving may one day be community college students. They can help make your training permanent in your community by helping you build the connections necessary to get your classes offered by their college. This has happened at the majority of Child Care Aware sites.
- **Parents with children in child care.** Families will benefit as providers offer more nurturing and responsive child care and learn to work together with parents (and children's other important adults) through professional development activities. Your project will be better able to respond to families when your work is informed by parents' expectations and insights about child care.

Responsibilities

Advisory committee activities varied across sites. In some communities, advisory committees took a formative role, helping to brainstorm and shape the project in an on-going way. In other communities, the committee was convened for a few meetings and then drifted apart. In hindsight, the majority of existing sites recommend you put in the time and effort to build a strong committee and keep its members involved throughout your project.

Active, ongoing advisory committees met monthly and proved helpful in carrying out a variety of responsibilities including:

- Offering advice, direction, and feedback about the project;
- Problem-solving;
- Advocating for the initiative out in the community;
- Raising funds; and
- Helping to institutionalize the project—or in other words, to make it relatively permanent.

Insights from Existing Sites: Collaboration

Collaborating with committee members can be time-consuming, challenging, frustrating, and ultimately—rewarding. Here are some suggestions from sites about how to make this and other collaborative strategies during your project work:

- **Enter into discussions with potential partners assuming that you want the same thing—in this case, higher-quality family child care.** This sets a tone of collaboration from the beginning.
- **Remember that most potential collaborators have something to contribute to your effort.** If not money or other physical resources, they may have, for example, helpful contacts or insights.
- **Listen carefully to identify people's interests so you can figure out how to best give them the opportunity to buy into and support your efforts, as well as how to adjust your plans to gain their support.**
- **Always remember that you and other project staff do not have to know how to do everything that must be done.** Though it takes a great deal of self-confidence to admit, "I don't know," you are opening the way for partners to contribute their expertise.
- **Think creatively.** Avoid falling into the trap of thinking "we have to agree to do it either my way or yours." Usually there are many other options. The challenge is recognizing them.
- **Remember that collaborations may not always work the way you hoped they would.** Even the most experienced and effective collaborators find building partnerships to be tough-going at times and don't always succeed.

In closing this section about collaboration, we need to say a special word about collaborating with family child care providers.

If there is one lesson to take away from Child Care Aware, it is that providers must be involved in any effort to impact the quality of family child care. Family child care providers know family child care. They are the ones who make change happen.

When there were good working relationships with providers in a community, providers and project staff listened to and learned from one another. They trusted one another. Each assumed responsibility and a variety of roles, such as helping to conceptualize the original project and develop the proposal, serving on an on-going advisory board, conducting training, promoting accreditation, and leading provider associations. Each provider and site staff member referred to the project as "ours".

In some communities, however, partnership proved elusive. Building partnerships is never easy. It takes time for potential partners to trust one another. Partners have to each be open to listening and learning from one another—and to give and take. And when family child care providers are involved, there are many stereotypes which need to be overcome. For example, the belief that providers are not interested in or capable of dealing with the world outside of their homes and that it is the role of support agencies to "do for" providers, rather than "work with" them. The difference between "doing for" and "working with" can be subtle. For instance, an agency staff person might be publishing and distributing the newsletter of a new association. In the "doing for" mode, she may have assumed providers couldn't do it and taken on the responsibility. In the "working with" mode, she and association leaders may have talked together and determined that she would do the first three issues as the association leadership became established, then work with the newsletter chair for the next several issues gradually turning over the responsibility of the newsletter to the association. For your project to be effective, you must overcome such stereotypes that might get in the way of reaching out to representatives of family child care associations and support groups—formal and informal—and building true collaborations.

FINDING FUNDING

According to existing sites, obtaining funding requires a combination of skill and dedication, successful collaboration with funders (big and small), and lots of good luck. The reality is: money is tight.

The Funding of Child Care Aware Communities

Child Care Aware communities were fortunate to be sponsored by Dayton Hudson's Mervyn's, Target Stores, and the Department Stores Division. The average grant to sponsoring organizations was $216,000 over a three-year period. Fourth and fifth year funding—grants typically between $10,000 and $20,000 - was offered to support early sites as they continued working to make permanent their efforts to improve the quality of family child care and to identify other funders to support their ongoing efforts. Most sites also contributed existing funds and services such as staffing to implement the professional development and consumer education strategies of Child Care Aware. And over half the existing sites have obtained additional funding primarily from local foundations, businesses, and government.

Two hundred thousand dollars may seem like a lot of money—especially if you are just starting to contemplate raising funds for a quality improvement project in your community. But remem-

ber, you can begin slowly, shaping your project's goals depending on available funding. Indeed, sites have found that reaching one goal leads to reaching others. For example, you may decide to begin by offering training. Sites have found trained providers become leaders and strengthen provider associations. Strong provider associations, in turn, promote accreditation among members and become a voice for family child care which can attract the interest of community partners who may be potential funders. The following information about expenses to consider and insights from existing sites on raising funds will help you determine your goals.

Basic Expenses to Consider

There are two basic categories of expenses you need to consider when designing a professional development resource development campaign: staffing and implementation expenses for each strategy. We will describe each below with the understanding that the specific amounts required will depend upon where you live.

Let's begin with staffing. Initiatives have on the average been staffed by one to two full- time-equivalent staff members over three years. Staff positions typically consists of a project coordinator, trainer(s)/community outreach staff, and a part-time secretary. The funding of staff time may be supported in part by community partners such as community colleges who pay for trainers. As projects continue, there will be need for fewer staff as responsibilities are assumed by community partners (for example, as training is offered by a community college).

Expenditures necessary to implement training, an accreditation-support program, and promote strong provider associations are listed below. As you review these lists, keep in mind that sites were creative in their efforts to keep within their budgets. For example, space for classes or printing was often donated.

The following expenses are considered by sites when determining the cost of training:

- Staff (salary and benefits)
- Space
- Travel
- Compensation for mentors (may include a fee, substitute care, and mileage and gas)
- Public Relations/Advertising
- Curricula materials (books, videos)
- Printing/copying
- Postage
- Snacks
- Graduation celebration including refreshments, pins, and awards

The following expenses are considered by sites when determining the cost of an accreditation-support program:

- Staff (salary and benefits)
- Space
- Compensation for mentors (may include the payment of a fee for services, substitute care, and mileage and gas)
- Validator training and fees
- Grants to providers to help them meet standards
- Printing/copying
- Postage
- Scholarships to cover part of the accreditation fee ($225 plus $20 membership fee for NAFCC—National Association of Family Child Care Accreditation—and $325 plus $17.75 to cover application kit, postage and handling for CDA—Child Development Associate Credential)

The following expenses are considered by sites when determining the cost of supporting and building strong associations:

- Staff (salary and benefits)
- Space
- Phone, printing, copying, and postage depending on arrangements made with the association

- Funding and technical assistance to support the holding of a local conference
- Scholarships to conferences

Insights from Existing Sites: On Raising Funds

Staff members at Child Care Aware sites share this advice with you:

- **Prepare yourself for hard work with ups and downs.** Resource development is demanding work. Take care of yourself to keep your energy—and your spirits—high.
- **Get the help you need to embark on a resource development campaign.** Depending on your fundraising skills, this may range from hiring a fundraiser, to getting advice from resource development people in other organizations, to finding someone to help you stuff and stamp envelopes for letters you are sending out.
- **Leave no stone unturned.** Research all possibilities for funding and support of needed resources ranging from free space for classes to donations of graduation gifts. If someone you ask for support says no—ask them for ideas of who else to talk with.
- **Involve potential funders in an on-going way from the beginning.** Include representatives from local government, businesses, foundations, community colleges, and service organizations such as the Junior League on your advisory board.
- **Put yourself in funders' shoes.** Explore together how you can help funders meet their goals through your work.
- **Reach out to educate potential funders about how your project can benefit them**—both directly or indirectly by providing more quality child care for their employees. Present your plans of what you are going to do and why clearly and logically.
- **Use existing research to validate the link between quality care and healthy development.** Two recently published studies will be particularly useful: *The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care* (Galinsky, Howes, Kontos, Shinn, 1994) and the Carnegie Foundation's *First Steps: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children* (1994).
- **Leverage funds from the beginning.** In the flurry of activity at the beginning of a project, money is often spent as fast as it comes in. Avoid this by making a plan from the beginning about how to use existing or incoming funds to raise additional funds. Funders—small and large—are more likely to contribute when they see others have contributed. Remember, a small amount of money from many sources, properly leveraged, can produce great returns.

Having built your foundation, it is now time to begin examining each of the professional development strategies: training, accreditation, and the creating and supporting of provider associations. We will begin in the next section with training.

Training

"This class has been an inspiration to quality. It has returned me to a commitment to excellence."

Family Child Care Provider
Austin, TX

The myth that family child care providers are only interested in an occasional workshop has been laid to rest by Child Care Aware. News of training got out and providers overwhelmingly responded. The majority of Child Care Aware sites have met or exceeded their training goals and report an 85-95 percent completion rate in classes. And providers who have graduated from classes are asking for more.

Ongoing training—as opposed to one-time workshops—proved to be extremely effective for two major reasons: it gave providers time they needed to feel more professional. There was time to learn information and techniques that made their jobs easier and more rewarding. For example, a provider could learn about positive guidance in class, go home and try some of the strategies she had heard about, come back and discuss how things went with her colleagues, make necessary refinements and try it again. There was also time for providers to get to know one another, thus creating a network of ongoing support. Courses at Child Care Aware sites had the unintended, but fortunate, effect of starting or strengthening provider associations by providers who wanted to continue meeting together.

And ongoing courses had the result of building providers' sense of professionalism. Ninety six percent of surveyed Family-to-Family graduates said they consider themselves to be professionals. As providers learned more, they became more confident and willing to share their knowledge and skills with other providers. In response, close to two thirds of Child Care Aware sites created Mentor Programs in which experienced providers who meet certain criteria (typically they must have been a provider for two years, must be licensed/registered, and must be accredited) are given training and ongoing support to promote the professional development of their colleagues. For many, mentoring represents a career step that may lead to other leadership and professional roles.

In this section, we will provide you with the information you need to implement a successful training initiative in your community. Let's begin by identifying factors to consider as you plan. These are:

- **The impact of training.** Why offer training?

- **The training to be offered.** What topics will be covered? What curricula will be used? What components will you include to maximize learning?
- **Delivery of training.** How long will training be? When will training be offered? Where will it be held? How much will it cost providers?
- **Trainers.** Who are effective trainers? What preparation do people need to become effective trainers of family child care providers?
- **Recruitment.** Who are the providers you want to reach? How do you most effectively reach them? What are the barriers to training and how do you overcome them?
- **Permanence.** How do you make training for family child care a permanent part of your community's support for its providers?

We will spend the rest of this section addressing these issues one by one, sharing with you the insights gained through the challenges and successes of staff members, trainers, and providers at Child Care Aware sites.

THE IMPACT OF TRAINING

"Why offer training?" you may ask. *The Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care* (Galinsky et al, 1994) found that training is associated with the offering of more sensitive, higher quality care.

In a survey of Family-to-Family graduates conducted by Families and Work Institute, an impressive 86% of providers said that they changed their family child care practice as a result of Family-to-Family training.

The changes in practice described by providers, beginning with the most common, include:

- Business practices
- Activities done with children
- The way I feel about myself
- Interactions with children
- Interactions with parents
- The setting up of indoor and outdoor spaces
- Involvement with other providers and/or my association

(For more information see *Family Child Care Providers Speak About Training, Accreditation, and Professionalism: Finding From A Survey of Family-to-Family Graduates*, Dombro and Modigliani, 1995)

In the words of a surveyed provider:

> *"Provider training opens doors for providers that they didn't even know were shut. It enlightens us in all areas: child development, business management, parent communication, and community service. The more we understand, the better our self-esteem. Our self-esteem is reflected in the faces of the children we care for."*

An astounding 90 percent of respondents plan to take additional courses to help them in their work as a provider.

THE TRAINING TO BE OFFERED

Courses offered by Child Care Aware sites were at the same time similar to and different from one another. Each covered the same topics which were determined by Dayton Hudson. But each was customized to meet the needs of providers in specific communities. In this section, we offer you the following information to build upon as you develop training in your community. Take what is relevant and make it yours.

The funders identified the following list of topics to be covered in classes, each necessary for providers to run their businesses effectively and to provide quality child care in their homes:

- Business practices;
- Local regulations;
- Health, safety, and nutrition;
- Child development and age-appropriate activities;
- Environments to promote learning;
- Guidance/discipline;
- Special-needs children;
- Parent-provider relationships;
- Professional development and community resources;
- Diversity issues; and
- Personal and family development.

Sites were directed to choose from existing curricula and to make necessary modifications to meet the needs of providers in their community. When choosing curricula, sites typically aimed to offer training one step more advanced that what was available before Child Care Aware. In the majority of sites, occasional one-time workshops and conferences were the only training available before Child Care Aware. These sites used Child Care Aware funding to offer relatively basic-level on-going courses. In other sites where basic training already existed, more advanced training was offered. The majority of sites customized existing curricula with handouts, videos, and presentations by guest speakers.

CHART B: MOST COMMONLY USED CURRICULA

The majority of sites customize existing curricula with handouts, videos, and presentations by guest speakers. The most commonly used curricula are:

	Level of Training		
Curricula	**Basic**	**Intermediate**	**Advanced**
Family Day Care Handbook (California Child Care Initiatives)	✓	✓	
Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care (Teaching Strategies)	✓	✓	
Family Day Care Evaluation Series (Harms, Cryer, et al.)	✓	✓	
Family Day Care Home Provider Program (Texas A&M)	✓	✓	
Second Helping (Windflower)		✓	✓

To get further information about each of these curricula, contact:

California Child Care Initiative's Family Day Care Handbook
California Child Care Resource & Referral Network
111 New Montgomery, 7th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care
Teaching Strategies, Inc.
P.O. Box 42243
Washington, DC 20015

Family Day Care Education Series
Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center
University of North Carolina
300 Nations Bank Plaza
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Family Day Care Home Provider Program
Texas A&M
5433 Westheimer, Suite 620
Houston, TX 77056

Second Helping
Windflower Enterprises
142 So. Claremont St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80910

Additionally, a variety of techniques to enhance learning were included in training. The table below lists these techniques showing how useful they were found to be by surveyed Family-to-Family graduates and how often they were perceived to be included in Family-to-Family classes.

TABLE 1: TECHNIQUES TO ENHANCE LEARNING

Learning Technique	Percent of providers who report it to be very useful	How often it was included in training
Visiting other family child care homes	78%	28%
Helpful examples and/or interesting stories to illustrate points	75%	94%
Whole group discussions	73%	98%
Presentations by guest speakers	73%	80%
Hands-on activities	72%	87%
Presentations by providers	69%	64%
Observers in my home giving feedback	67%	28%
Working with a mentor	66%	28%
Informal discussions with other providers (during breaks and before and after class)	66%	93%
Small group discussions/working in pairs	66%	85%
Take home exercises	65%	76%
Role playing	59%	64%
Watching videotapes	51%	79%

Based on providers' enthusiasm, trainers may want to figure out how to make visiting other providers' homes a regular part of their classes. For those who can overcome the obstacles of time and money, we have included a sample home observation assignment based on one used successfully and received enthusiastically in Family-to-Family classes in Austin, Texas. (See Chart C.)

A Model Home Observation Assignment

CHART C: HOME OBSERVATION WORKSHEET

This observation assignment is designed to help you focus on the quality of care provided in a family day home. Respond to the following questions while observing the home environment and consulting with the provider during your home visit:

1. **Business Practices**

   List at least three records that are up-to-date and reflect good business practices.

   Name two things that the provider does to promote parents' understanding of her policies.

2. **Health and Nutrition**

   Name four daily practices that promote the health of the children and provider.

   Describe two meals served by the provider that meet minimum nutritional requirements established by the USDA.

3. **Safe Indoor Environment**

   List six features of the indoor environment that reflect the provider's attempts to make it safe for children.

   In what ways has the provider ensured that the following areas of her home are safe for children (including infants, if present).

   The toilet/diapering area(s):

   The sleeping area(s):

   The play area(s):

4. **Safe Outdoor Environment**

   Identify four features of the outdoor environment that show the provider pays attention to children's safety.

5. **Play Environment**

   Name at least four toys/materials that promote children's exploration and self-esteem.

   Name at least one feature of this play environment that you like. Explain why.

6. **Interaction Between the Caregiver and Children**

   Describe two actions of the provider that reflect a warm and nurturing attitude.

   Describe two interactions in which the caregiver encourages children's exploration and learning.

This assignment is based on an assignment created by:
Karlene Bennett, Family Child Care Specialist, Austin, TX.

When considering learning techniques, it is important to note that though providers (or any learners) may prefer a certain technique, that technique may or may not challenge them to experiment to try new ways of doing things and improve their practice. Thus a trainer cannot increase the effectiveness of training simply by including favored techniques. If growth and change occur through being challenged to look at oneself, to experiment and try out new ideas and practices in a supportive environment—and we believe it does—two key questions for trainers emerges: What are successful strategies for challenging providers to experiment and grow? How can these strategies be integrated into learning techniques?

DELIVERY OF TRAINING

The "how long does it last?", "when does it meet?", "where is it held", and "how much does it cost?" factors will influence your success at meeting training goals. In Child Care Aware sites:

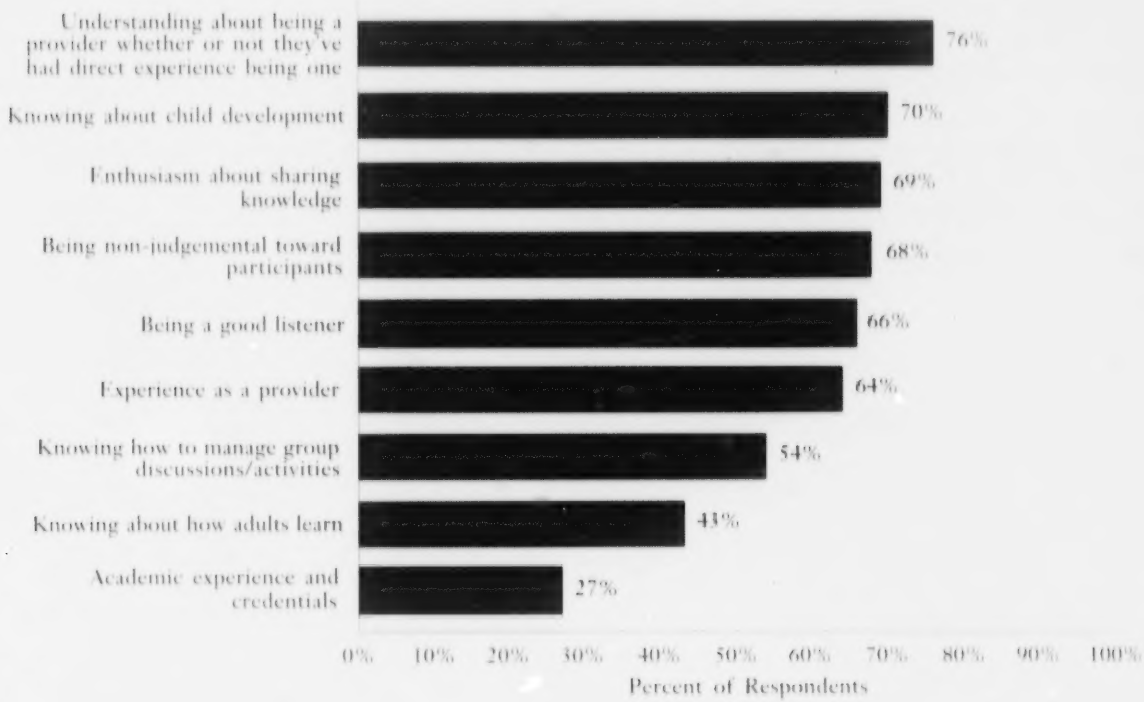
- Training courses typically ran from 15-30 hours in length;
- Courses were offered weekday evenings and/or Saturdays, typically often determined by surveying providers in the community;
- Training was held in a variety of settings including sponsors' locations (many sites held training at Mervyn's and Target Stores), community college campuses, sponsoring agencies, community rooms, and donated spaces such as the offices of a local paper; and
- The cost to providers ranged from $0–$50.

TRAINERS

As in many Child Care Aware communities, finding and in many cases developing effective trainers will be a critical component of your success as the word about training gets out and the demand for training increases. Figure 1 (on the next page) lists characteristics of effective trainers.

FIGURE 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TRAINERS

PROVIDERS FOUND THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS, LISTED IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE, AS ESSENTIAL FOR AN EFFECTIVE TRAINER:



Familiarity with family child care is seen as essential by providers. Surprisingly, understanding about being a provider is more important to these respondents than actually having experience as a provider. These providers strongly suggest that trainers who have not been providers spend extended periods of time in family child care homes to learn about family child care and get a feel for how it differs from center-based care.

Providers' responses on characteristics that make an effective trainer offer insight that can be helpful when training or hiring trainers: While it is important to find someone who understands family child care, knows child development, and is skilled at managing group process, personal traits including enthusiasm, being non-judgmental, and being a good listener must also be considered.

Both former and current providers can and do make effective instructors. Yet being a provider is not enough. To become effective trainers, providers typically need information and skills in the following areas:

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

- Child development and early education;
- Adult learning;
- Techniques to communicate to and with a group;
- Group management skills i.e. how to encourage participation, what to do if someone dominates the discussion; and
- Diversity and anti-bias education.

Models used by sites to train providers to be trainers which you may want to replicate include:

- **Co-teaching.** In this model, a provider co-teaches with an experienced trainer. Co-teaching is most effective when both parties work together to develop and plan their classes.
- **Train the Trainer Sessions:** In this model, graduates of training are prepared to become trainers through courses or practicums. In the practicum model, a core of provider/trainers teach part of a class they attend. Working in pairs under the guidance of the course instructor, they develop and present two modules of the class. At the end of the class, the provider/trainers and instructor spend a day together reflecting on lessons learned about effective training strategies.

On the other hand, being an experienced, competent instructor of, for example, early childhood and center-based caregivers is not enough either. To be effective with family child care providers, experienced instructors need to respect and understand the details of life in family child care.

Models used by sites to train experienced instructors to work with providers that you may want to implement include:

- **Building partnerships with the provider community.** Experienced instructors at various sites gained necessary insight by talking with providers about their joys, challenges, and strategies for success. They found it valuable to visit providers' homes for several days to get the feel of the daily routine and issues.
- **Co-teaching.** In this model, an experienced trainer co-teaches with a provider who integrates his/her knowledge and experiences of family child care into the class.

"To learn about family child care, I reached out to providers in my community. They were very willing to help me. They invited me to their homes and to their association meetings."

Community College Instructor
Sacramento, CA

RECRUITMENT

You can offer the best training in the world, but if no one knows about it, no one will come. Child Care Aware sites have learned some lessons about recruitment that will be helpful when you want to get the word out about your training.

First, you need to know who it is that you are recruiting. In the majority of Child Care Aware communities, recruited providers were of various ethnic and income groups. And they were at various stages of their professional development. This turned out to work well for basic level courses. Sites discovered that providers at various stages of professional development can benefit from taking classes together. People who are considering being providers can make better-informed decisions about whether family child care is for them. This has the benefit of creating more intentional providers—providers who want to offer child care and are more likely to offer quality care. New providers gain ideas, information, and colleagues during a class. They offer their enthusiasm and fresh perspectives to more experienced providers. And more experienced providers report feeling proud and competent that they have knowledge and experience others find valuable. However, as providers completed classes, they wanted to take more advanced classes with others who had comparable experience and training.

Providers heard about training through a variety of means. Ranked in order, beginning with the method that reached the most surveyed Family-to-Family graduates, these recruitment strategies included:

- Newsletters;
- Association meetings;
- Child Care Food Program staff;
- Another provider;
- Posters, flyers, brochures; and
- Resource and referral agency staff.

Different recruitment strategies worked for new and more experienced providers. Newer providers were more likely to hear about training from other providers. This confirms the importance of word-of-mouth as a recruiting tool. More experienced providers learned about training primarily from newsletters. These providers who have been in the business longer are clearly more linked into the family child care information network.

Most barriers to training were overcome slowly, as positive word-of-mouth about training spread. These barriers included providers being unaware of training, thinking they do not need training to do their jobs, having limited time and energy, and being afraid of the unknown.

Additional factors determined by sites to influence recruitment to training include regulatory standards and providers' need to have at least basic level training geared specifically toward and including only providers. After the first one or two family child care training series, most providers feel comfortable to participate in classes with other early childhood professionals.

PERMANENCE

As you begin planning training, think of the future. Consider how the training you are offering today can be institutionalized or made permanent by being integrated into one or more of the existing systems in your community.

The majority of Child Care Aware sites have institutionalized training through community colleges or are working towards this goal. Of the remaining sites, six plan to continue offering training through the sponsoring agency, and two plan to offer training through provider associations.

Recruitment and enrollment for training are proving difficult to institutionalize. In the majority of sites, these components still require the involvement of agency staff who have developed relationships with the provider community. The implication is that some degree of ongoing funding is required to pay for the time a staff member spends on these activities.

Accreditation

"We have discovered the concept of accreditation is like a seed that must be planted, nurtured, and allowed to grow."

Project Staff
Houston, TX

Child Care Aware is the first large-scale experiment with accreditation of family child care in the United States, a process that applies a set of quality standards to providers and their homes. Original estimates of how many providers would become accredited have turned out to be unrealistic. Accreditation has proven to be a "harder sell" than training and is taking longer to catch on than was anticipated. Most sites have not come close to meeting their accreditation goals.

And yet great progress has been made. Sites have identified barriers to accreditation and developed strategies to overcome them. Sites are beginning to report that "accreditation is in the air"; slowly, stories are beginning to emerge that accreditation is beginning to catch on. In Bellevue, WA, for example, a provider called her resource and referral agency for information about accreditation two years after taking an accreditation workshop, when a perspective parent asked if she was accredited. And, the more than 500 providers that have become accredited through Child Care Aware sites represent 50 percent of the total number of providers accredited across the country.

Factors you need to consider as you plan to promote accreditation in your community include:

- **The impact of accreditation.** Why promote accreditation in the first place?
- **The accreditation to be promoted.** What are the major accreditation tools to consider?
- **Accreditation support models.** What might an initiative to promote accreditation look like?
- **Recruitment.** What are the major obstacles to accreditation that you might encounter? What are strategies to overcome them?
- **Permanence.** How do you make accreditation a permanent part of your community's ongoing support for its family child care providers?

We will now address these issues one by one—again sharing with you the insights of staff members and providers in Child Care Aware communities to inform your efforts.

THE IMPACT OF ACCREDITATION

Providers typically report that becoming accredited increases their professionalism and self-esteem, helps them correct things they are doing wrong, develops their leadership skills, and increases the likelihood they will remain in the field. Some providers find being accredited helps them market their programs and to earn more money. Chart D (on the next page) lists these and other reasons why providers like accreditation.

Accredited providers typically feel good enough about accreditation—and about themselves—to assume leadership roles in encouraging other providers to become accredited and supporting them through the process. Across the country, accredited providers are working to "demystify" the process by serving as formal and informal mentor/advisors, participating in workshops about accreditation, writing articles in their association newsletters, and opening their homes to demonstrate the wide variety of accredited homes.

Chart D: Ten Reasons Why Family Child Care Providers Like Accreditation[1]

by Nancy Cohen, Families and Work Institute

1. **Providers learn from the process.** All accredited providers, even those with years of experience and graduate degrees in early childhood education, say they learn from accreditation. They find that accreditation gives them the opportunity to examine their homes and the way they interact with children, assuring that all the details are in place. Providers report that accreditation is an incentive for them to improve their programs. It gives them concrete goals toward which to work. It is likely that as accreditation becomes more widespread, less experienced and less skilled providers will pursue it and will learn even more from the process.
2. **Increases providers' self-esteem.** Most accredited providers feel that accreditation gives a boost to their self-esteem. They realize all the things they are already doing right! Accredited providers say that they feel good that a national organization says they operate in a professional manner. They say that this independent confirmation also makes parents feel good about them and their programs. Providers feel proud to hang the accreditation certificate on their walls.
3. **Makes providers feel more professional.** Many accredited providers say that accreditation makes them feel more professional—less like babysitters. Accreditation makes them feel that being a family child care provider takes special skills and is not something anyone can do well. Accreditation helps providers relate to accredited professionals in other fields. Providers also point out that if even they were to switch fields, accreditation is another "feather in their caps" and that future employers would be impressed that they "went the extra mile." Additionally, some providers are interested in accreditation because they think that the profession needs to be established. They become accredited not because they, personally, need accreditation, but because the profession needs them to become accredited.
4. **Gives providers a more concrete definition of quality in family child care.** While any providers have a theoretical understanding of quality child care, some are not sure exactly what quality looks like. One provider says that accreditation gave her the tools she needs to do her job better. Providers like that accreditation describes concrete components of quality that are specific to family child care, not a child care center. Accreditation is a ruler against which providers can measure themselves.
5. **Keeps providers excited about their work.** Accredited providers report that the accreditation process helps make them excited about their work and keeps their job challenging. Some accredited providers find the process just what they need to "wake themselves up." One provider re-reads the accreditation study guide whenever she feels she is "slacking off" or loosing patience with the children. Accreditation may help providers stay in the field longer.
6. **Encourages providers to pursue ongoing training and support.** Many accredited providers ask, "What's next?" Accreditation gives providers a successful self-study experience. The more training with which they have good experiences, the more training they want to pursue. If accredited providers are not already active in their local associations, they are likely to join or start one, thus becoming part of a support network and feeling less isolated.

(continued)

Ten Reasons (continued)

7. **Promotes higher quality than state regulations.** Many providers are interested in accreditation because it represents a higher level of quality than is required by any state. While each state's regulations for family child care are different, most just address minimal health and safety standards. Providers feel that accreditation represents a higher level of quality—a level that states will probably never require but that they are proud to offer and that children and parents deserve.
8. **Accredited providers become leaders in the field.** Some accredited providers find that accreditation is a stepping stone to getting more involved with family child care issues in their community, state, or at the national level. These providers feel that accreditation gives them the confidence to be seen as leaders in the family child care field. They enjoy meeting and networking with other accredited providers at local, state, and national conferences. Additionally, accredited providers are often mentors for providers going through the accreditation process.
9. **Helps providers market their programs to parents.** While most parents are not yet asking providers if they are accredited, accredited providers tell parents they are and describe what it means. They tell parents that a validator and parent have each observed their program and agreed that she provides quality child care. They tell parents that accreditation is a process, not just a one-time workshop. Parents seem impressed by accredited providers' commitment to the field. Providers also think accreditation helps them with marketing because "people see you the way you see yourself." If they feel confident about their programs, parents will notice.
10. **Helps some providers earn more money.** Some accredited providers raise their fees because they feel more confident about the quality of their programs. Accredited providers' incomes may also go up because their parent communication skills improve and they are more likely to get paid by all their parents on time and keep all their spaces filled.

These reasons were suggested by accredited providers during interviews at Family-to-Family sites across the United States.

[1] *For convenience, the term "accreditation" is used to refer to accreditation, credentialing, and other forms of provider certification.*

THE ACCREDITATION TO BE PROMOTED

Typically sites have promoted either the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation and/or the Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential, both national forms of accreditation. Two sites chose to promote local forms of accreditation. These were Child Care Partnership of Dallas' accreditation and Wisconsin Early Childhood Association's (WECA) accreditation.

The charts below will provide you with an overview of the two national forms of accreditation to help you determine if promoting one or both best meet the needs of providers in your community. The first chart below compares the content and approach of NAFCC Accreditation and CDA Credentialing. The second, the pros and cons of each from a policy point of view.

CHART E: A COMPARISON OF NAFCC ACCREDITATION AND CDA CREDENTIALING IN CONTENT AND APPROACH

	CDA CREDENTIALING	NAFCC ACCREDITATION
STANDARD OF QUALITY	Medium to high quality. Can be somewhat to much more rigorous than NAFCC, depending on the interpretation by CDA representatives and committees.	Low-medium to medium quality. Depends on score—composite score of 86% is passing. Some criteria are more objective than most of CDAs.
TYPE OF KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED	Requires a relatively comprehensive understanding of child development—good practice and the reasons behind it.	Requires demonstration of specific components of quality—but not necessarily the reasons behind them.
FOCUS OF STANDARDS	Providers' skills. Home is not addressed.	Providers' skills and the home.
REQUIRED TRAINING	Direct assessment model: 120 hr. Council model: 120 hr classroom training and fieldwork offered through the professional preparation program (Modigliani 1991b).	Training and belonging to local association encouraged, but not required.
COST	Direct assessment model: $325 ($650 after 6/1/92). Council model: $1500 (includes 120 hr of classroom training).	$225 for accreditation + $20 to join NAFCC.
COMPLETION TIME	Typically 6 to 18 months.	Typically 3 to 4 months.
AREAS ADDRESSED	Generally, more detailed and comprehensive than NAFCC accreditation. In particular, much stronger in the areas of developmentally appropriate activities, family support and interaction, and multi-culturalism. Less on business practices.	Generally, less detailed and comprehensive than CDA credentialing, except similar to CDA on health and safety issues and much more detailed than CDA on the home and business practices.
ADVISING	Formal advisor meets with providers at least three times, although usually much more extensively.	No formal advisor required but NAFCC identifies an informal mentor at providers' request. Providers pursuing NAFCC find working with mentors and advisors very helpful and sometimes necessary.

CHART F: THE PROS AND CONS OF NAFCC ACCREDITATION AND CDA CREDENTIALING FROM A POLICY POINT OF VIEW

CDA CREDENTIALING	NAFCC ACCREDITATION
Standards represent medium to high-quality child care.	Standards represent low-medium to medium quality care—higher quality than required by almost all states.
Beyond the immediate reach of many providers.	Within the reach of many providers, especially if they have training and support.
In general, CDA is better known in the early childhood community.	Beginning to be known in the early childhood community.
Relatively transferable if providers switch to other early childhood settings, such as centers, Head Start, or home visiting.	Not transferable to other child care settings.
More expensive than NAFCC, but federal scholarships are available to lower-income providers.	Still expensive for providers. Some communities offer scholarships.

For further information about these national accreditation programs, you can contact:

National Association for Family Child Care
1331-A Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 348
Washington, DC 20004

Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
1341 G Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20005-3105

RECRUITMENT

As we have said, accreditation has taken longer than was originally anticipated to catch on. But there is promise. Sites have discovered factors that have impacted their overall success in promoting accreditation. And sites have made great progress in identifying barriers to accreditation and developing strategies to overcome them, a prerequisite to recruiting providers into the process. We begin this section by sharing the factors that help create a climate of success for accreditation. And then we'll share obstacles and strategies to overcome them since it is likely you will come up against many of the same situations sites have encountered.

Factors that contribute to the overall success in promoting accreditation include:

- Promoting accreditation from the very beginning of a project and integrating it into training;
- Educating staff and building a commitment to accreditation;
- Creating a mentor program in which accredited providers give colleagues the one-on-one assistance they need;
- Enlisting the support of accredited provider-leaders and associations to promote accreditation; and
- Making the accreditation instrument available to interested providers.

And yet even when the stage is set for success, sites have found obstacles still exist. Much progress has been made in identifying these obstacles and—we're happy to report—strategies to overcome them. These include:

- **Providers are nervous about being observed.** This barrier is addressed by having staff members and accredited providers help providers prepare for accreditation.
- **Many providers think their homes must look like "preschools or palaces" to meet accreditation standards.** Staff and providers at some sites address this by showing slides of accredited homes during training sessions, holding training in accredited homes, and running tours of accredited homes.
- **Parents' lack of knowledge about accreditation provides no incentive for providers to become accredited.** Though their children are the major beneficiaries of provider's becoming accredited, not knowing about accreditation severely limits any positive feedback or thanks parents might give. To address this, resource and referral agency parent counselors and accredited providers are working to educate parents about accreditation and to help parents understand the link between accreditation and nurturing, responsive care for their children.
- **Some providers find cost to be a major obstacle to accreditation.** Sites are using Child Care Aware funds to offer accreditation scholarships. Oregon has developed a national model for an accreditation scholarship fund.
- **There is no automatic system by which accredited providers earn higher incomes.** This barrier remains a puzzling challenge. While many parents say they are willing to pay more for accredited child care, providers are reluctant to charge more.

Additional barriers to accreditation that have emerged recently include:

- **The perceived gap between the accreditation process and practice.** Providers need help to understand how accreditation impacts their daily practice.
- **The quality of the NAFCC instrument.** Should it be more rigorous? Provider friendly? Is it culturally sensitive? In response, NAFCC is seeking funding to study and revise the instrument.

- **The failure of providers to re-accredit.** Since the only rewards are intrinsic, providers gain no additional benefit through reaccreditation. Expense and lack of time are other reasons they do not update their credential.
- **The need for structural changes in NAFCC to oversee the accreditation process.** There is widespread feeling, even among NAFCC board members, that accreditation has grown too large for NAFCC to handle with its current financial and staffing resources. NAFCC is addressing this issue.

ACCREDITATION SUPPORT MODELS

Sites have implemented two major accreditation support strategies you may want to use in your community: "The Slow-Drip Method" and "Turning on the Faucets".

In the "Slow-Drip Method," providers are encouraged slowly and steadily to become accredited, through written information and personal contact. Articles appear regularly in the local family child care association newsletter and in the newsletter of the lead agency, a resource and referral agency. A mentor program is established in which accredited providers offer technical assistance to colleagues who wish to be accredited. Workshops on accreditation are presented at the lead agency and at the association's yearly conference. The accreditation tool is the underlying structure of the classes offered for providers by a community college.

Drip…drip…drip…The slow process of dripping, one drop at a time, can add up to amazing results…If a kitchen faucet drips slowly with the sink stopped up, the sink will overflow. Eventually the whole house might flood.

We had recently come up with the realization that many providers were reluctant to become accredited. Splashy publicity with little follow through was not going to change their minds. Instead, we planned ways to reach providers slowly and continuously…with information about when, where, and how to become accredited. We hope eventually to fill our county with accredited providers.

Project Director,
San Diego, CA

More recently, San Diego is experimenting with "Turning On The Faucets." In this more aggressive approach, the agency will use Child Care Aware funding to pay half the accreditation fee, mentors and accreditation support staff will be made available to providers, study groups to help providers become familiar with the tool and prepare will be held, validators will be trained and paid an additional $50 (in addition to the $50 now paid by NAFCC), and accredited providers with openings will be at the top of the list of referrals sent to parents.

In another version of "Turning on the Faucets", Nashville is enhancing accreditation support by delineating steps to be followed in a comforting and motivating structure and giving providers a variety of opportunities to become familiar with the accreditation criteria through training that covers each component and home visits. In addition, funders have collaborated to provide funds so that providers can apply for a $100 mini-grant to upgrade their home or buy supplies and/or a $150 scholarship.

PERMANENCE

As with training, think of the future when you begin promoting accreditation. Plans to institutionalize accreditation in Child Care Aware communities include promoting accreditation through mentors and associations, offering training, technical assistance, and financial assistance through Child Care Aware lead agencies, and offering accreditation classes through community colleges. The majority of sites however, are still wrestling with the basics of getting a core group of providers to become accredited. Essentially, the challenges seem to revolve around the lack of incentives for providers and the unfamiliarity with accreditation of all concerned.

Because cost is a potential barrier to accreditation, you may want to consider how to assure providers can receive the financial support they need. Oregon has created a scholarship fund for accreditation which Mervyn's has designated as a national model. Overseen by the Oregon Community Foundation's Oregon Child Development Fund, the project has established a scholarship endowment with a $20,000 start-up grant from Mervyn's. Additional funds have been raised from private and corporate contributions. For further information, contact:

Child Development Fund
#725 American Bank Building
621 SW Morrison Street
Portland, OR 97205
(503) 227-4288

Building Strong Family Child Care Provider Associations

"Before I joined an association, I knew only two other providers. Having colleagues who know what I experience day after day has made me feel better about myself and helped me provide better care."

Family Child Care Provider
Riverside, CA

Learning that building strong associations is a key strategy to promoting quality family child care was a welcome, but unforeseen, result of training at Child Care Aware sites. Associations began forming and/or growing in communities when providers taking Family-to-Family training wanted to continue meeting together to continue educating and supporting one another. The trend continues today as Family-to-Family graduates assume leadership roles in an increasing number of associations, bringing to their associations an appreciation of and commitment to training and accreditation as strategies to promote professional development.

Supporting and building associations can be challenging. Politics and personalities can transform even the smallest steps—for example, holding a planning meeting—into major projects. And yet when one considers the benefits of strong associations to individual providers and to the family child care field, the time, effort, and frustrations are well worth it. In this section we will provide you with lessons learned by project staff and family child care providers in Child Care Aware communities about the impact of strong provider associations, strategies to promote strong associations, and how to make strong associations a permanent part of your community's ongoing support for family child care providers.

THE IMPACT OF ASSOCIATIONS

Associations have tremendous impact on both the individual provider and the family child care field as a whole.

Associations are the most cost-effective means of giving individual providers the on-going support needed if they are going to continue developing as professionals and provide quality care. The recently published *Study of Children in Family Child Care and Relative Care* (Galinsky,

Howes, Kontos, and Shinn, 1994) found that belonging to an association is an indicator of quality family child care. Providers who "seek out the company of others who are providing care and are involved with other providers" are more likely to be sensitive and responsive—and to offer care that is of higher quality.

On a profession-wide level, strong associations can be strong voices for family child care. In several Child Care Aware communities, associations have advocated for the field by addressing legislators about zoning issues, working with licensing offices, educating reporters who in turn wrote positive stories about family child care, and building bridges with the larger early childhood community, planning joint advocacy and professional development activities.

STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE STRONG PROVIDER ASSOCIATIONS

Child Care Aware staff and family child care providers in Child Care Aware communities have discovered and invented strategies to promote strong associations.

Staff have found that the following factors influence success at working in partnership with providers to promote strong provider associations:

- The perception of providers as partners as opposed to a more typical model in which the agency assumes the role of parent and the association, the role of child;
- The ability to work collaboratively;
- The ability of the agency to step back as the association grows stronger;
- The holding of retreats of association board members; and
- The ability to build upon the expertise of NAFCC in developing leaders.

> *"We see our goal as helping organizations grow and then letting go. When you try to hold on—to control a group—you limit both what they and you can accomplish."*
>
> Resource and Referral Agency Co-Director
> Sacramento, CA

Association leaders have identified the following factors that impact associations' success:

- Setting clear goals for the association and its members;
- Providing support for members including education and information;
- Identifying clear roles for leaders;

- Developing strategies and making a priority of developing new leaders;
- Making members feel needed; and
- Finding opportunities to share experiences and lessons learned within the association and with the larger community (i.e. early childhood organizations and local licensing or zoning agencies) through articles and by presenting and attending workshops at conferences.

PERMANENCE

How do you make strong associations a permanent part of your community's ongoing support for family child care providers? Site staff and providers have discovered the answer: develop strong leaders. Too often leadership is recycled among a few association members who feel burdened and resentful even as they hold on to their power. Frequently, these leaders resign and there is no one prepared to assume their responsibilities and roles. Associations—in Child Care Aware sites and across the country—are coming to the realization that leadership should not be limited to a few members. Rather all members should be encouraged to develop their leadership skills. In response, association leaders with the support of site staff are taking the lead in educating themselves and their members about leadership. They are working to develop leadership of members through a series of steps including developing trust in the group, establishing and using committees, and planning together for the future. Examples of specific activities being undertaken by associations include: holding retreats to discuss topics such as facilitating a meeting, mentoring, and reaching out to new providers, planning consultations with NAFCC, and sponsoring leadership workshops and training sessions.

Evaluating Your Success

The goals and objectives you set early in your project give you guidelines to use in measuring your success. We suggest you revisit them on a regular basis. This has three major purposes:

- To remind yourself of what you hope to accomplish—a perspective that can be lost in the day to day efforts of implementing a project such as Child Care Aware;
- To assess how far you have come in reaching your goals and objectives, which strategies seem to be most effective and which may need to be modified or perhaps even discarded; and
- To determine if your goals and objectives need to be revised—up or down—based on factors you may not have been aware of when you began.

Conclusion

Child Care Aware has focused attention on family child care as a legitimate and respected sector of child care. As Child Care Aware site staff and providers have worked to improve the quality in their communities, they are creating the knowledge base of how to promote high quality family child care which we surmise will have ongoing impact on the quality of family child across the country.

Through its investment in Child Care Aware, Dayton Hudson, Mervyn's, Target Stores, and The Department Stores Division have touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of providers, children, and families across the United States. They hope that the information presented in this guide will help your initiative make a difference and that family child care providers, children and parents in your community will share the feelings expressed by one Child Care Aware provider:

> *"Thanks for caring and loving and providing us with opportunities to learn and grow. Child Care Aware has changed my life."*

Appendix A: Selected Child Care Aware Resources

The following are selected resources for parents, family child care providers, and family child care associations that have been created as part of the Child Care Aware Initiative.

ON QUALITY

CHILD CARE: Quality is the Issue by Elizabeth Ehrlich (1992).

This briefing paper, prepared in cooperation with the Child Care Action Campaign, was produced by the National Association for the Education of Young Children for the Child Care Aware campaign. According to the author, the value of quality child care is well documented. Yet far too many children continue to be denied quality care. Our challenges are clear. Parents, educators, policy makers, and communities at large need to focus on what constitutes quality in child care. Parents need to know how to find it, caregivers need to know how to provide it, and communities need to know how to help build up this quality resource: where to invest, what to support, and how to encourage quality.

Contact
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(800) 424-2460

Choosing Your Child's Care: A Guide for Parents with Young Children

Based on Child Care Aware's five steps to finding quality child care—Look, Listen, Count, Ask, Be Informed—this guide was written to give parents ideas of what to look for and what questions to ask when searching for child care. Realistic and personal, parents are told that though searching for child care can be time-consuming and frustrating, it is critical that they make the commitment to take the time and energy to look at a number of facilities and interview a number of caregivers to assure they find the best place for their child. The emotional side of choosing child care is also addressed. Parents are assured they are not alone if they experience anxiety, even grief at "giving over" their baby to someone else's care. They are encouraged to find a caregiver who understands and can help them through these feelings.

Contact
Child Action, Inc.
8795 Folsom Blvd.
Suite 101
Sacramento, CA 95826
800-822-5259

ON PROMOTING ACCREDITATION

Accreditation. Added Security When Choosing Child Care.

A popular piece due to its creative format as well as content, this pamphlet has been used by several sites. Addressed to parents, it is designed as a baby securely wrapped in a blanket. The blanket unfolds to reveal three panels which together defines accreditation and gives parents information about its benefits. The center panel describes the benefits of accreditation for a child, parent, child care provider, employer, and society. The outer panels describe the characteristics of accredited family child care providers and child care centers.

Contact
Initiatives for Children, Inc.
5433 Westheimer, Suite 620
Houston, TX 77056
(713) 840-0948

ON DEVELOPING STRONG ASSOCIATIONS

Steps to Professional Growth: Leadership Development Through Family Child Care Associations by Kathleen Rowland and Rene Merrell (1989).

This easy-to-use manual has been found to be helpful by both new and existing provider associations. It gives family child care providers creative suggestions to help their family child care association become effective and productive through the practice of good leadership skills of all its members. An underlying premise is that "there can and should be many leaders in a group". The manual presents plans for a series of nine meetings—each designed to develop the leadership of members. Beginning with developing trust, assessing the needs of individuals and involving all members in the first meeting, associations are taken through the steps of becoming effective and productive which include:

- Developing trust in a group;
- Planning meetings that meet people's needs;

- Using mentoring to teach leadership skills;
- Using social occasions to meet the social/emotional needs of members;
- Developing by-laws;
- Establishing and using committees;
- Developing consensus in a group;
- Applying simplified rules of order;
- Dealing with difficult members;
- Planning fund-raising activities; and
- Planning for the future.

For each step, readers are given information sheets filled with insightful information and practical suggestions to implement them. An appendix offers rich resources including icebreakers and get-acquainted activities, forms, and job descriptions within an association.

Contact
Initiatives for Children, Inc.
5433 Westheimer, Suite 620
Houston, TX 77056
(713) 840-0948

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Readings in Family Child Care Professional Development

These articles, compiled from the newsletter of Child Care Aware/Family-to-Family, are written by site staff and family child care providers to describe and share their efforts to enhance the quality of family child care in their communities.

Contact
The Family Child Care Project
Wheelock College
200 The Riverway
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 734-5200
(617) 734-7103 FAX

ON CONSUMER EDUCATION

Child Care Aware: Community Consumer Education Strategies

Designed to assist agencies in the development of effective child care consumer/public education efforts, this guide is a compilation of successful consumer education strategies implemented across the United States in conjunction with the national Child Care Aware campaign.

Contact
Child Care Aware
NACCRRA Field Office
2116 Campus Drive, SE
Rochester, MN 55904
(507) 287-2220

Appendix B: Sponsoring Agencies Of Child Care Aware Initiatives

Child Care Aware Directory

Arizona

Phoenix

Arizona Child Care Resources
4628 N. 17th Street, Suite G118
Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-234-3941 PHONE
602-234-3943 FAX

Tucson

Tucson Association for Child Care
1030 N. Alvernon Way
Tucson, AZ 85711
602-881-8940 PHONE
602-325-8780 FAX

California

Kern County

Community Connection for Child Care
1921 - 19th Street
Bakersfield, CA 93301
805-861-5218 PHONE
805-322-3519 FAX

Alameda County

Alameda County 4C
37553 Fremont Blvd.
Fremont, CA 94536
510-790-0658 PHONE
510-790-1483 FAX

San Fernando

Child Care Resource Center of San Fernando Valley
5077 Lankershim Blvd. #600
North Hollywood, CA 91601
818-762-0711 PHONE
818-762-1701 FAX

Ventura County

Child Development Resources
505 S. A Street
Oxnard, CA 93030
805-486-3531 PHONE
805-483-5789 FAX

Riverside County

Riverside County Office of Education/Coodinated Child Care
3939 Thirteenth Street
Riverside, CA 92502
909-788-6622 PHONE
909-788-6615 FAX

Sacramento

Child Action, Inc.
8795 Folsom Blvd, #101
Sacramento, CA 95826
916-386-4318 PHONE
916-387-5762 FAX

San Diego

YMCA Child Care Resource Service
3333 Camino del Rio S., Ste 400
San Diego, CA 92108-3839
619-521-3055 PHONE
619-521-3050 FAX

San Mateo County

4C of San Mateo County
700 S. Claremont, #107
San Mateo, CA 94402
415-696-8780 PHONE
415-343-8719 FAX

Sunnyvale

North Valley Family to Family
City of Sunnyvale
P.O. Box 3707
Sunnyvale, CA 94088-3707
408-730-7608 PHONE
408-730-7699 FAX

Colorado

Denver

Colorado Office of Resource & Referral Agencies
7853 E. Arapahoe Rd, # 3300
Englewood, CO 80112
303-290-9088 PHONE
303-290-8005 FAX

Colorado Association of Family Child Care
9101 Pearl Street, Ste. 307
Thornton, CO 80229
303-450-7297 PHONE

Florida

Palm Beach

Child Care Resource & Referral
551 SE 8th Street, Suite 500
Delray Beach, FL 33483
407-265-2423 PHONE
407-265-3583 FAX

Georgia

Georgia Association for Family Day Care
48 Henderson Street
Marietta, GA 30064
404-425-7229 PHONE
404-425-7229 FAX

Child Care Solutions
(Program of Save the Children)
1447 Peachtree St. NE, Ste 700
Atlanta, GA 30309
404-885-1578 PHONE
404-874-7427 FAX

Illinois

Chicago

Illinois Family to Family Child Care Initiative
C/O Marshall Field's
111 N. State St., 11th Fl.
Chicago, IL 60602
312-781-5461 PHONE
312-781-4604 FAX

Indiana

Indianapolis

Family to Family Partnership
615 N. Alabama, #108
Indianapolis, IN 46204
317-687-6245 PHONE
317-687-6247 FAX

Kentucky

Louisville

4C of Louisville
1215 So. 3rd Street
Louisville, KY 40203
502-636-1358 PHONE
502-636-1488 FAX

Michigan

Michigan 4C Association
2875 Northwind Dr., #200
East Lansing, MI 48823
517-351-4171 PHONE
517-351-0157 FAX

Minnesota

Mn Child Care Resource & Referral Network
2116 Campus Drive SE
Rochester, MN 55904
507-287-2497 PHONE
507-287-2411 FAX

North Carolina

Charlotte

Child Care Resources
700 Kenilworth Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28204
704-376-6697 PHONE
704-376-7865 FAX

Ohio

Columbus

Action for Children
78 Jefferson Avenue
Columbus, OH 43215
614-224-0222 PHONE
614-224-5437 FAX

Toledo

YWCA/Child Care Connections
1018 Jefferson Avenue
Toledo, OH 43624
419-255-5519 PHONE
419-255-5752 FAX

Oklahoma

Tulsa

Tulsa Technology Center
3850 North Peoria
Tulsa, OK 74106-1619
918-428-2261 PHONE
918-428-5027 FAX

Child Care Resource Center
2819 S. New Haven
Tulsa, OK 74114-5937
918-747-1985 PHONE
918-747-5390 FAX

Oregon

Oregon Child Care Resource & Referral Network
1900 Front Street NE
Salem, OR 97303
503-375-2644 PHONE
503-399-9858 FAX

FTF/Chemeketa Community College
P.O. Box 14007
Salem, OR 97309
503-399-6563 PHONE
503-399-6979 FAX

Tennessee

Nashville

Nashville Area Assn. on Young Children
1701 - 21st Ave. S., #406
Nashville, TN 37212
615-383-4910 PHONE
615-383-6265 FAX

Texas

Austin

Austin Families, Inc.
3307 Northland Dr., #460
Austin, TX 78731
512-454-4732 PHONE
512-459-4295 FAX

Dallas

Child Care Partnership of Dallas
The Child Care Group
1221 River Bend, Suite 250
Dallas, TX 75247
214-630-7911 PHONE
214-631-7715 FAX

El Paso

YWCA of El Paso
1600 N. Brown
El Paso, TX 79902
915-533-7475 PHONE
915-577-2525 FAX

Houston

Initiatives for Children
5433 Westheimer, Suite 620
Houston, TX 77056
713-235-1017 PHONE
713-235-1022 FAX

Utah

Children's Service Society of Utah
576 East South Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84102
801-355-7444 PHONE
801-355-7453

Washington

WASHINGTON STATE

Child Care Resource & Referral Network
917 Pacific Avenue, Ste. 301
Tacoma, WA 98402-4421
206-383-1735 PHONE
206-572-2599 FAX

SPOKANE

Family Care Resources
525 E. Mission
Spokane, WA 99202-1824
509-483-3114 PHONE
509-483-0345 FAX

SEATTLE

Child Care Resources
15015 Main St., #206
Bellevue, WA 98007
206-865-9920 PHONE
206-865-9079 FAX

OLYMPIA

Child Care Action Council Family to Family Training
108 State Ave. NE, 2nd Fl.
Olympia, WA 98501
206-786-8907 PHONE
206-786-8960 FAX

EVERETT

Volunteers of America of Snohomish County
2801 Lombard
P.O. Box 839
Everett, WA 98206-0839
206-259-3191 PHONE
206-258-2838 FAX

TACOMA

Tacoma Pierce County
Resource & Referral
City of Tacoma
747 Market St., Rm 1036
Tacoma, WA 98402
206-591-5344 PHONE
206-591-5050 FAX

Wisconsin

MILWAUKEE

4C Community Coordinated Child Care
2001 W. Vliet
Milwaukee, WI 53205
414-933-5999 PHONE
414-933-6077 FAX

Familiesand**Work**Institute
330 Seventh Avenue
14th floor
New York, NY 10001